NORTHERN MESSENGER

DEVOTED TO TEMPERANCE, SCIENCE, EDUCATION, AND AGRICULTURE.

VOLUME XVI., No. 9. MONTREAL & NEW YORK, MAY 2, 1881. SEMI-MONTHLY, 30 CTS. per An., Post-Paid.

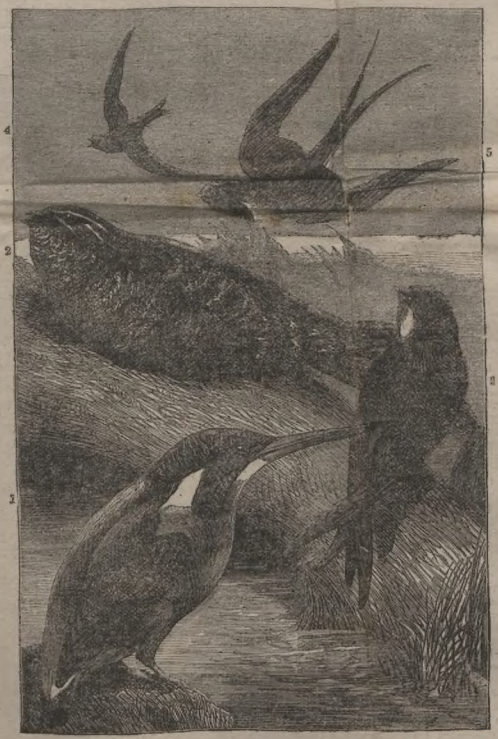
A GROUP OF BIRDS.

When this number of the MESSENGER reaches those of its subscribers in Canada and the most northerly States they will be waiting anxiously for the presence of their feathered friends who visit them only in the summer. It is not probable that they have seen a kingfisher like the one pictured here which represents the European variety. The branch of the family seen in America is known as the belted kingfisher, from a band across its breast. It has a long crest and in other respects differs from its European cousins. Its flight is rapid, and it often stops suddenly like a sparrow hawk, and hovers over the water, darting headlong after its prey, which it carries to the nearest stump of a tree and swallows instantly. It follows the course of rivers even to the cascades of their sources, and its presence near a stream is good evidence to the angler that there fish are abundant. It is fond of resorting to mill ponds, where the stillness of the water enables it easily to detect its prey. Its nests are made in holes dug horizontally in a bank to the depth of from four to six feet, the entrance being just large enough to admit a bird, and the end rounded like an oven.

The goat-sucker or nightjar, which sits along, not across, the trunk of the tree, is a peculiar looking bird, and more like the swallow than any other. The family are characterized by a short, very broad, depressed bill, with an immense gape extending beneath the eyes and rendered larger by numerous bristles for arresting their insect prey; the eyes are very large, and easily dazzled by the full light of day; the tarsi are short and weak, the toes long, the hind toe closely united to the base of the inner; the plumage is soft, enabling them to fly without noise. In the sombre colors and texture of the feathers, in the large head and eyes and nocturnal habits, they resemble the owls, but zoologically they come nearest to the swift family. The name goat-sucker is derived from the Latinized Greek appellative *caprimulgus*, which originated in the idea that they suck the mammae of goats; the French call these birds *engoulevents*, or wind swallowers, and *crapaude volants*, or flying toads, probably on account of the great capacity of the mouth. Like the owls, they hide themselves by day, coming out toward sunset, and pursuing insects on the wing with great rapidity during the twilight; they make no nests, deposit their eggs on the bare ground or in slight concavities; they are found in all parts of the world, but most abundantly in South America.

The martin, swift and swallow are all very much alike. It is not long since the swifts were classed amongst the swallows, but modern ornithologists mark them as a separate family coming near the humming bird. The swifts, according to their name, are swift and graceful flyers and feed exclusively on insects which they capture on the wing. The American swift, or chimney swallow, like all of its kind, naturally make their nests in hollow trees, but in the neighborhood of man build in such chimneys as are not used in summer for fires; the nest is made of twigs snapped off from a dead tree during flight; fastened together by viscid saliva, without soft lining, and is generally placed from five to eight feet from the entrance. They pass in and out the chimney with great rapidity, making a whirring sound like distant thunder; there are sometimes two hundred in a single chimney.

There are more than fifty varieties of the genuine swallow, which are generally remarkable for their great powers of flight. Their food consists of insects, which they take on the wing, usually in the neighborhood of water, with remarkable skill and grace; they drink on the wing, sweeping along the surface of the water, and often wash themselves by a sudden plunge. They fly at the rate of a mile a minute in their ordinary evolutions, but are rather awkward on the ground from the length of the wings and the shortness of the legs; they live more on the wing than any other bird, even feeding their young in the air; their sight is very acute, they fly low in damp weather, where the insects are most abundant, and are thence supposed to foretell rain.



1. Kingfisher. 2. Nightjar. 3. Martin. 4. Swift. 5. Swallow.

A GROUP OF BIRDS.

The martins, which are distributed over North America, from the regularity of their movements have a place amongst the "harbingers of spring." They appear in Louisiana early in February in large flocks, in the Middle States from the middle of March to the 10th of April, in New England about the 25th of April, and further north at a later period, departing for the south again about the 20th of August in immense flocks, and all at once at the dawn of some calm morning. The flight is graceful, easy and swift; they are expert in catching their insect prey, in bathing and drinking while on the wing, performing aerial evolutions to the annoyance of their bird enemies. They are very bold and do not hesitate to attack crows and hawks which from their superior powers of flight they drive away; even the fierce little king bird (sometimes called field martin), with similar fighting propensities, has to yield to the strong and swift martin; they perch easily upon trees, and, notwithstanding the shortness of their legs, walk well upon the ground. From their attacking cats, dogs, and all flying marauders of the farm yard, they are great favorites, and are provided with elevated boxes for rearing their young in most towns of the United States. They are much attached to their breeding places, and return to the same year after year. In the absence of a box they build in any crevice or hole in a tree. The nest is made of leaves, twigs, grasses, feathers and other soft materials, and generally contains from four to six pure white eggs. Many pairs breed in the same box in perfect harmony; two broods are generally reared in a season; the males assist in incubation. The food consists of wasps, bees, beetles, and other insects, though they seldom seize the honey bee.

"To HIM," said the dying Jacob, "shall the gathering of the people be." "To Him," said the evangelical prophet, "shall men come." He is the centre of all attractions, because he is the only source of relief. To whom, in all our ignorance, should we go but to Him Who hath the words of eternal life? To whom, in all our guilt and weakness, should we go but to Him in Whom we have righteousness and strength? To whom, in all our dangers and misery, but to Him Who is the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble? To Him shall all flesh come.—*W. Jay.*

MUCH as we dislike to admit our defects, we find it better to know and guard against than to ignore them.

Temperance Department.

JOE'S PARTNER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BABES IN THE BASKET," &C.

(*National Temperance Society, New York.*)

CHAPTER VII.—THE PARTNER.

Joe was losing faith in his partner. A whole week had passed and nothing had been heard from Ben White, when one morning a servant on horseback appeared at the little house on the hill.

Kate stepped to the door anxiously. Could it be that Mr. Brown had written to her husband? No. The note that was handed her was addressed to Joe—"Little Joe, the Giant;" that could only mean her darling, and the writer must be the lad whom he remembered with so much interest.

Wild with proud excitement, Joe broke open the note; his pride abated, however, when he found he could with difficulty make out its contents. Ben's hand-writing was but a scrawl, and Joe had never had a letter before in his life, and, to his surprise, he found that it was by no means as easy to read as the well-formed copies in the writing-books.

"You read it, father," said Joe, "and I'll listen. I do wonder what it can be about—the partnership, I suppose," and Joe looked dignified.

Harry Barber read aloud in his best style:

"DEAR LITTLE GIANT:—Your partner has been awfully sick—sick in bed—or he would have attended to business. Now I can't come to you to settle matters, so I think you will have to come to me. Ask your mother if she can't spare you for a week. Father wants you to come. It would be jolly to have you to help me for a little, for I am off my legs. Perhaps wading in the brook all day and sleeping in my wet clothes didn't suit me. At any rate, old 'Pills'—that is what I call the doctor—has been dosing me [illegible], and I am as weak as a cat. Why, he wouldn't let me write to you until now; and, of course, between partners, I couldn't trust our business to a servant. I believe you'll come. If you do you can ride behind Tom, our man. I've often tried it and found it splendid. Bring your Bible, Joe. Partners ought to read the Bible together.

"Yours, &c.,
"BEN WHITE."

Round the last sentence Ben had drawn a line, making a kind of sacred enclosure, to shut off that part of the letter from the more secular remainder. Ben's life was as yet much like his letter—the serious portion set off by itself—not pervading, sanctifying, and elevating all he thought and said and did. He met his heavenly Father reverently and lovingly from time to time, but he did not live in the consciousness of His continual presence. Ben had much yet to learn as a Christian boy.

As for Joe, he was in a state of perfect delight. He took up his Testament, and with a "Mother, I know you will let me go," he ran to the door to mount behind Tom, like a minute-man in war-time.

Kate did not know whether to laugh or to cry, as she looked at Ben's visitor in his home costume. His patched little blue shirt had seen two days' labor in the field, and his trousers, his only other garment—a pair of his father's cut down in a hurry—and now rolled up to his knees, were in no fashion familiar to town eyes.

"Stop! Stop, Joe," said his mother. "You may go, but not now; not as you are. You will need your other suit, and I must put up a little bundle for you, for a change, and—dear me! your shoes are all out at the toes."

"Never mind my shoes, mother, now. Ben and I are partners, and then, don't you remember how his boots looked the night he was here? They did look hard, though! He won't care how I am dressed."

"But I do," said Kate.

"Poor boy!" exclaimed Harry, as he looked at his eager child. How the father's heart smote him that his wretched habits had brought his children to poverty!

"You don't mind Joe's going, Harry?" said Kate. "He was a nice young gentleman, and I am sure he means well by Joe."

"Joe," said Harry, solemnly, without answering his wife—"my boy, maybe you'll see good things to eat there that you are not used to. Don't touch a thing that's not given to you; and, remember, your stomach's a poor master. Don't let it get the upper-hand with you. Know when you are done and stop! They may have wine there—who knows? You wouldn't touch a drop of drink, my boy!"

"Not if I were paid in gold, father. You may be sure of that!" said Joe warmly.

"But we are keeping the man waiting," said Kate. "I'll tell him you'll be there this afternoon. But where?"

Kate gave the message politely, and got the direction carefully, so that little Joe might have no trouble in finding the house.

"Please, ma'am," said the servant, "Mr. Ben sent this too," and he handed down a basket so heavy that Kate almost dropped it with surprise, as she took it in her hand. On the cover a scrap of paper was pinned, which read as follows:

"FOR MY PARTNER. Here's all I ought to have eaten for a week. I don't know what to do with my share of the family provisions, so I send it to my partner, to make up for that night I was so hungry at his house. B. W."

"B. W. must have been blessed with an uncommonly good appetite, judging from his week's allowance.

Kate looked at Harry. Would he like her to accept the gift?

"It don't do for my pride to stand in the way of you and the children's having what's comfortable after what I've brought you to," said Harry.

Perhaps his pride was a little mollified by the sight of such good cheer, as he much needed just then, and to which he had long been a stranger. As for Mollie, she testified her unqualified approval of the whole proceeding; especially she declared herself satisfied with the contents of the basket.

"I'm sorry you can't go too, Mollie," said Joe: "but, of course, a girl would be of no use. Then, you know, I'm the partner, and it's natural I should be the one. Never mind, Mollie, I shan't have heaps to tell when I come back. We boys have to see the world, and then the girls hear about it from us."

Mollie was too deep in a seed-cake to make any reply to Joe's apology, and evidently was not in deep grief at the separation.

Joe felt quite like a man when afternoon came, and he started for town. His little bundle was in one hand, tied up in a pocket-handkerchief, and in the other he carried an extemporo cane, big enough for an infirm grandfather. This cane was to be Joe's weapon, offensive and defensive, by the way. There was the mill to be passed, and the miller's great dog was sure to stand at the door, opening his mouth wide as if he were fairly longing for a bite of the leg of just such a boy as Joe Barber. He had done it before, and he would be sure to do it again.

As for tramps the very thought of them made Joe grasp his cane tighter, and whirl it round his head, to see how it would operate in a skirmish; and then he tried a quick little run, to make sure that his legs were in training for service, in case sudden flight should be necessary.

Joe had no occasion to put his pluck to the test, by the way. He fairly arrived at Mr. White's door without any adventure worthy of being related, even to Mollie, always a patient listener.

It was well that Joe's courage had not been drained, for he needed all his little stock even to ring at the door and ask for his partner. Very far from that partner he felt as he went up the high white marble steps, and stood in the tiled vestibule. Ben White and little Joe, why, there seemed almost a world between them!

Joe had given the bell a fierce ring, as his spirit conquered his timidity, and the door was promptly opened. He did not need to say a word, for the man who appeared was the same who had brought the note, and he said, with a quizzical look, which Joe did not think quite complimentary, "Mr. Ben's at home, of course, and in a great hurry to see you. He's quite in a fever; you must go up at once."

Joe wiped his shoes, as his mother had directed. It was a dangerous process, and they might come to pieces in the midst of the experiment; and with this little preparation he entered the house. He felt as if he were in a mysterious and charming dream, as he climbed the long staircase, and then followed the servant to a room where the door stood open.

"Hallo! Partner! That's jolly!" said a voice from a great sofa, where a figure in a dressing-gown lay among heaps of pillows.

"Ben White did not look jolly at all, for he was deathly pale, and his hand trembled as he put it out to welcome Joe.

"Why, Mr. Ben," said Joe, losing all shyness, "you look like Mollie did, when she was getting over the fever; you must have been awful sick!"

(*To be Continued.*)

CIDER.

"I declare!" said Farmer Jones one morning, "I had no idea our golden pippins and other early fall apples were so ripe. Boys, there's work for you in the orchard, and plenty of it too. The best that have fallen must go at once to market. See that there are no bruised ones among those you gather, for I have won a name for the fairest fruit brought to market, and ready sale for all I offer. Nothing like having a good name, boys." And the sturdy farmer drew himself up with pride.

"And what shall we do with the rest?" asked his son David, or Dave, as he was usually called. "Some of them are so dead-ripe they seem 'most ready to rot."

"Well, you can feed the pigs with those. I must see, though, to having the cider-mill in order. Jackson, at the inn, will want two or three barrels as soon as I can get some made. He says I'm always on hand first, and with prime cider too. No need to come up here to test my cider, for my word for it is as good to him as a bank-bill." And again the farmer's eyes twinkled with conscious pride.

It was a merry set of boys and girls who met in the orchard with baskets and barrels to gather a load of ripe fruit for the market. At first it seemed as though more fun and frolic was going on than real work, for the rosy-red and golden fruit was tossed about from one to another in high glee.

"Come, Ben, we won't get this fruit sorted to-day, if we don't hurry," said Dave, going to work with a will. "Father, you know, must go into town early to-morrow morning with them."

"Yes, and we must be sure that he has the very best," replied George, "for he says he depends upon us to help keep up his good name for the earliest and very best produce coming from any farm hereabouts."

"That's so! Father prides himself upon his good name," replied their sister Jennie, "and since 'many hands make light work,' Maggie and I will help you to gather the apples."

David said very little, but was the first one to fill a bushel-basket of really tempting fruit.

"What makes you so glum, old fellow?" called out Ben. "There you are working for dear life, and never a word to say. Take things a little easier, as I do."

"Dave's in one of his brown studies," said Maggie with a laugh. "A penny for your thoughts."

"Yes, let's have your wise cogitations," added George. "Are you calculating how much is to be made out of the apples and cider toward getting you off to college this fall?"

"Not exactly," replied Dave with a smile "Truth is, I want to go to college bad enough, but I'd rather count the cider money out this year and altogether."

"Count it out? What do you mean? There's nothing more jolly than when the cider-mill is going. Lots of boys are already smacking their lips in anticipation of a sip of our prime cider." And George drew himself up in almost comical imitation of his father.

"That's just it, George. I'm afraid we are giving the downward start to some of the boys, as well as cultivating ourselves a taste for liquor."

"Of all things!" And Ben and George joined in an uproarious laugh at David.

"Laugh away, boys, but it's a fact. Cider, first sweet, then strong hard cider, has in many, many instances been found to be the first wrong step in a drunkard's life. And I for one don't mean to gather apples for the cider-mill; that's the long and short of it."

"Hoity toity! what does all this mean? Setting yourself up as a temperance lecturer, eh? Better wait until you are asked to gather apples for the cider-mill," said his father in a displeased tone as he unexpectedly drew near. "The cider-mill has been worked for years, first by your grandfather, and now by me, and I guess we know what we are about. Cider make a fellow tipsy? Bah! It is only such crack-brained chaps as you, Dave, who get such silly notions in the head. If it's book-learning you want you shall have plenty of it."

And Farmer Jones made it convenient to send David to college, "out of the way," he said, "of preaching such ridiculous notions."

A few years later, however, when Ben and George went to the cider-barrel rather too often, after it had become slightly fermented, and from there to the tavern-bar for something still stronger, and he found the good name he had so prided himself upon was slipping away from him through his sons' drunken carelessness, and they no longer a comfort to him, he saw his error and wished he had listened to David's warning voice against making cider.—*Selected.*

JOHN DARRYLL'S DREAM.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

One day, as he strolled down the village street,
John Darryll chanced an old friend to meet,

"How are you, old boy?" was the greeting warm.
"Come in for an hour, out of the storm,

"And we'll have a chat and a smoke together,
And a drink to offset this wild March weather."

And he linked his arm in John's, and led
The boy's feet on toward a sign ahead,

Where "Wines and Liquors," in great gold letters,
Linked together like demons' fetters,

Told the passers-by that within was sold
Sorrow, and ruin, and shame untold.

They crossed the threshold and entered in
Where never before the lad had been.

Warm and pleasant, and fair to see.
This starting-place to misery.

"Something to drink," the boy's friend said,
And John walked up to the bar with dread.

But he dared not say as he knew he ought,
A firm, strong "No." "Just this once," he thought.

He drank the draught that his friend held out—
His first and his last, beyond a doubt!

Ah! little, how little, we think or know
Of the easy path that leads down so low.

One step—and the others come fast and free—
And before we know it comes misery.

Then he and his friend sat down to chat
Of old school-day friends, and this and that,

It seemed to John that a wizard's spell
On him and those about him fell.

The present vanished. The future was here.
He had lived in a moment full many a year.

He stood in a room that was cold and bare,
And a man was alone in the shadows there.

A man with a face like his, but old
In a life whose shame can not be told.

Old in shame, but still young in years,
A fitting sight for an angel's tears.

John Darryll looked on the wreck and cried,
"This man is myself! Would God I had died

"Before the fetters were forged on me
That bind my soul eternally.

"I must die like a dog, and be forgot,
Save by the few who could help me not.

"A drunkard! May God forgive me the woe
I have caused the mother who loved me so!"

He woke from his dream with a sob and a moan,
And found himself on the street alone.

"Thank God, it was only a dream?" cried he.
"God in his mercy sent it to me

"To warn me of danger. Never again
Shall the draught that is ruin to souls of men

"Pass these lips of mine." An old man now,
John Darryll remembers and keeps his vow.
—*Church and Home.*

THE HOUSEHOLD.

HOME UPHOLSTERY.

There are a great number of contrivances that may add appreciably to the comfort of our houses, and yet may be arranged at a small cost by those who can handle a hammer without endangering their finger-ends. Old boxes of all sizes may be converted into ornamental as well as useful receptacles, and, carefully upholstered, serve to fill window-recesses with advantage to the appearance of the room. With the assistance of what is called a "handy man" much may be done. This gifted person goes about the world with a ball of twine, a foot-rule, hammer, and a bundle of nails of various sizes and ages for his companions.

Let us suppose that there are three or four old trunks which are sufficiently unsightly in their present condition, having been knocked about by many a heavy-handed porter—perhaps by more than one generation of porters. They are to be converted into window-seats. The first thing to be done is to choose the material to cover them. Rep is serviceable—home upholstery had better venture on nothing more expensive. Chintz is pretty, but not so endurable as rep. The latter, probably, is chosen and purchased. The box must be emptied of its contents before operations are begun, and may be brought out into the middle of the floor. All obtrusive nails should be picked out. The sewing-machine will be found useful in running together the seams, but I do not advise that the braid shall be sewn on by machinery.

The braid or gimp should be chosen of a color or colors to harmonize not only with that of the rep, but with the general surroundings. Begin by measuring the depth of the box from the ledge on which the lid shuts down, to the floor. Measure off this depth on the rep, leaving about two inches for a hem. Cut off a sufficient number of breadths to leave a slight fulness all round the box. Too much fulness destroys the effect. It is also a mistake to leave this vallance too long. It should rest upon the floor, no more. Hem it up all round and sow on the braid. Having done this, measure on a piece of strong tape where the corners come and set in pins to mark the places. Gather or pleat the vallance into this tape, leaving the rep full at the corners. It may be less full at the back than in the front, if intended for a window-recess or any other position where the back will not be seen. Then nail the tape round the ledge of the box at the front and sides, and level with the ledge at the back. This done, the stuffing of the top must be considered. I cannot advise much stuffing, for amateur upholsterers will probably fail to induce it to keep in position, unless it be made into a regular cushion, and this may be done by stitching the inside cushion through at regular intervals with a packing-needle and strong thread. But I have found two layers of wadding answer every purpose, whereas the thicker stuffing, whether of "colored wool" or flock, gets pushed back by use, and the occupant of the home-made window-seat usually deserts it for a chair, where he is not obliged to choose between lounging back or slipping off.

A piece of coarse unbleached calico, cut about half-an-inch wider and longer than the top of the box, serves as a covering for the wadding, and ought to be lightly nailed down over the latter before the rep is put on above it. Fringe and brass-headed nails form the prettiest finish to these boxes, but sometimes the wood of the trunks is so hard that it is nearly impossible to hammer in the nails without making them double up. The Handy Man had better do this part of the work.

For a bedroom, chintz is the prettiest covering for one of these boxes, which are useful for keeping dresses in, and also make a comfortable seat where there is, perhaps, no room for a couch.

Recesses may be utilized for books or curiosities at a small expense if the Handy Man makes the shelve. These may be covered with green or crimson leather, velvet, rep, or even baize, and can be finished with fringe and ornamental nails. In the case of a short occupancy of rooms, objection may be made to the expense of fitting up shelves which, as fixtures, cannot be removed when the occupant leaves. This objection may be obviated by getting the Handy Man to make little wooden rests at each side of the recess, on which the shelves can be supported. In this case there is a further advantage, in that they are so easily removed for the purpose of cleaning. A miniature portiere of chintz or some plain material worked in crewels may be hung before the shelves, if it be wished to protect the articles from dust, but without this the fringe and nails make a very complete finish.

Brackets may be finished off in the same way. The covering may be of any of the materials mentioned above. Lace over satin makes a pretty substitute for fringe and nails; so do Berlin wool work and braided or embroidered cloth of pretty colors, the outlines being finished with a pretty cord of some suitable shade. Brackets are useful for holding statuettes, vases, or other objects that would be in harm's way on the table. They are also valuable for holding candlesticks or lamps where there is not gas.

Upholstering the dressing-table and looking-glass is quite a piece of pleasant fancy work. Materials: pink glazed calico and white muslin (an old skirt does capitally, flounces and all) or some pretty cretonne with a light ground. Implements: a small hammer (is there such a thing as a ladylike hammer?—I read of one of these the other day) and some tin tacks. With the help of these, a common deal table may be converted into a very ornamental dressing-table.—*Englishwoman's Magazine.*

CHECKING PERSPIRATION.

The following advice may be found profitable by those who like to cool off suddenly when perspiring:

A Boston merchant, in "lending a hand" on board of one of his ships on a windy day, found himself at the end of an hour and a half pretty well exhausted and perspiring freely. He sat down to rest and, engaging in conversation, time passed faster than he was aware of. In attempting to rise, he found he was unable to do so without assistance. He was taken home and put to bed, where he remained two years; and for a long time afterward could only hobble about with the aid of a crutch.

Less exposures than this have in constitutions not so vigorous resulted in inflammation of the lungs—"pneumonia"—ending in death in less than a week, or causing tedious rheumatisms, to be a source of torture for a life-time.

Multitudes of lives would be saved every year, and an incalculable amount of human suffering would be prevented, if parents would begin to explain to their children, at the age of three or four years, the danger which attends cooling off too quickly after exercise, and the importance of not standing still after exercise, or work, or play, or of remaining exposed to the wind, or of sitting at an open window or door, or of pulling off any garment, even the hat or bonnet, while in heat.

HOW TRAINED.

Many years ago, a Friend living near Philadelphia, well-known as a humanitarian, started in a little village a debating club for the benefit of his poorer neighbors, in which literary and religious subjects were discussed.

To these meetings came a blacksmith, whose vigor of thought and speech attracted the attention of the good Quaker. He introduced him to Lucretia Mott and other influential Friends who helped him by their advice and friendship.

The blacksmith was Robert Collyer, who, whether we agree with him in religious doctrine or not, is to-day one of the most powerful and eloquent men in the American pulpit. Mr. Collyer lately, in an address to young men, gave the circumstances of his early life which he regarded as the foundations of his later success.

First, he was given, he says, good birth; in that his father was an honest, truth-telling, industrious mechanic; his mother, a woman of faculty with great executive ability, and a fine sense of poesy and humor. Both parents were free from taint of hereditary disease.

Secondly, he was given good breeding; he was brought up in a cottage whose walls and floors were so clean that when the village was ravaged with fever it alone escaped; it swarmed with children who were scrubbed clean, dressed coarsely and fed on oatmeal and milk. No lying, no shirking, no dishonesty, was the rule over that door. To this early physical training he attributes the fact that he never has been sick for a single day in fifty-seven years; while he accounts for his terse, vivid Saxon language, mastered absolutely without an education, by the fact that his only books were Bunyan, Goldsmith, Crusoe, Shakespeare and the Bible. His mind was untainted and his ear unspoiled by the vapid, unclean wash of cheap modern literature.

Thirdly, he was led to forswear liquor forever.

Fourthly, he married a good, true woman for love.

Both boys and parents can gain from these facts hints of priceless value as to the training which is healthiest and wisest during childhood.

MILKING AND MILKING TIME.

Any one who has had to do with dairy farming knows that there are a great many poor milkers, against a few who understand and practise the proper method of removing the milk from a cow. It is a well-known fact that some persons can obtain more milk from a cow with greater ease and in quicker time than others. In the first place, there must be an air and spirit of gentleness about the milker, which the cow is quick to comprehend and appreciate. It is not to be expected that a cow, and especially a nervous one, will have that easy, quiet condition so necessary to insure an unrestrained flow of milk, when she is approached in a rough way, and has a person at her teats that she justly dislikes. There must be a kindness of treatment which begets a confidence before the cow will do her best at the pail. She should know that the milker comes not as a thief to rob her, but simply to relieve her of her burden, and to do it in the quickest, quietest and kindest way possible. The next point in proper milking is cleanliness; and it is of the greatest importance if first-class milk and butter are the ends to be gained in keeping cows. No substance is so easily tainted and spoiled as milk; it is particularly sensitive to bad odors or dirt of any kind, and unless the proper neatness is observed in the milking, the products of the dairy will be faulty and second-class. Those persons who can and will practise cleanliness while at the cow are the only ones who should do the milking. It matters not how much care is taken to be neat in all the operations of the dairy if the milk is made filthy at the start; no strainer will take out the bad flavor. Three all-essential points are to be strictly observed in milking—kindness, quickness and neatness. Aside from these three is the matter of the time of milking. It should be done at the same hour each and every day, Sundays not excepted. It is both cruel and unprofitable to keep the cows with their udders distended and aching an hour over their time. We will add another ness to the essentials already given, namely, promptness.—*Watchman.*

HOSPITALITY.—Hospitality, in this country, has come to signify merely the giving of a meal. It has taken its lowest and coarsest meaning for us. In France, the highest members of the *ancien regime* met in the stately old saloons, evening after evening, where *eau-sucre* and little cakes were the only entertainment offered, but where De Stael, Chateaubriand and their friends served an intellectual banquet such as the world seldom has equalled. It is undoubtedly right to set before our guest as choice food as we can afford, but we should remember that feeding is not hospitality. It is to make him free of our best thought, to welcome him to our habits and life, to the sanctuary of our home to send him away with something better to remember than a well-cooked capon. As matters are now, the cost of providing a pretentious meal induces many families to shut their doors on all guests. They will not receive their friends if they cannot treat them to a display of rare dishes and curious pottery. We know houses, on the contrary, where the table is always simple and prettily set, and where a cover is invariably laid for the occasional stranger. When he comes, however humble the fare (and it has been reduced to bread, butter and milk), he is welcome, and no apologies are made. This is true hospitality. Parents should remember that much of the education of their children depends upon the guests whom they see at their father's table. They should not, therefore, shut out these guests from any vulgar notions of vanity and display.—*Youth's Companion.*

HAVING YOUR OWN POSSESSIONS.—Where there are several sisters in a household, they are sometimes a little careless in regard to their own personal property. Every young lady should have her own exclusive brushes, combs, books, collars, cuffs and articles of convenience or luxury. She should not wear or use articles belonging to another, either with or without the ceremony of borrowing. In going away from home for a night or two, if the visit be to a very intimate friend, it may be allowable to borrow a night-dress, but the guest should invariably take her own brush and comb. While nobody should be disobliging, there are still rights which belong to the individual, and those are the happiest homes where these rights are conceded and protected by common consent.

DISINFECTANTS.—At this season of the year foul air and gas are forced back into the house, through the drainage pipes, oftener than at any other. Disinfectants are therefore very necessary. A pound of copperas dissolved in a gallon or two of warm water, and poured into a basin or sink, will cost very little, and yet abate some unpleasant odors. Other disinfectants, most of them good, may be obtained of almost any apothecary, and they are so cheap and so easily applied that no one need suffer by the principal indoor nuisance of the season.

PUZZLES.

CHARADE.

My first is mightier than the sword—
That's what the poets say:
And yet a little child may wield
And guide it on its way.

My second's found all o'er the earth
An animal, my dears.
My third upon the ocean rides,
Freighted with hopes and fears.

My whole is useful to mankind
Of every race and class.
Learn it while young my little friends;
No idle moments pass

NUMERICAL SYNCOPATIONS.

1. Take ten from a part of a waggon, and leave a drink.
2. Take fifty from an aromatic plant, and leave a retired nook.
3. Take five hundred from a tree, and leave a kind of cloth.
4. Take five from a number, and leave an exclamation.
5. Take one from a fold, and leave to weave.
6. Take four from livelihood, and leave a fish.

TWELVE HIDDEN BIBLICAL RIVERS.

Come in, I'm rimming caps, made up. H. rates them richer, I think, Ada—Havanese as you are—than you have seen. To earn one tab, Anabel and you, who like droning ever music, gave up harp, archary, and hid De Kelso, making, I honestly think, more trouble than Jack an' Abban.

ANAGRAMS.

Ha! French Dike.
Rich Sparta.
A union guitar.
Even Latin.
Oh! a man in gums.
Send tripe.
A hot swing.
Nice B. must boil.
Yea, guns go.

DIAMOND.

1. In Constantinople
2. An animal.
3. An ancient poet.
4. Existing in name only.
5. An animal.
6. An animal.
7. In Constantinople.

CHARADE.

My first is modern.
My second is a weight.
My whole is a noted philosopher.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES OF APRIL 15.

Word-Dwindle.—1. Steamer. 2. Master. 3. 4. team. 5. Mat. 6. Ma. 7. M.

Easy Hidden Furniture.—1. Table. 2. Sofa. 3. Chair. 4. Stool. 5. What-not. 6. Crib. 7. Cot. 8. Hat-rack. 9. desk.

A Bouquet.—1. Jonquil. 2. Crown Imperial 3. Snowdrop, 4. Violet. 5. Lilac. 6. Buttercup. 7. Primrose. 8. Narcissus. 9. Cowslip. 10. Elder.

A FEW ALLIGATORS.

BY FRED BEVERLY.

Florida may be called the home of the alligator. Here he finds water and climate exactly to his liking. Further north, the rigors of winter compel him to subside into the mud. His delicately organized system cannot endure cold.

Scattered along the Georgia coast, in the creeks and bayous, they are occasionally seen; but it is when sailing up that wonderful river of Florida, the St. John, that we meet them, in constantly increasing numbers, till nearly every stretch of sandy shore, every half-sunken log, shows one or more.

In the little-known creeks of the interior, and in the swamps of the Everglades, they fairly swarm. But they are not so many now as in former years, for travellers and hunters have reduced their ranks, and rendered them shy where once they were bold. To the hunter of hides, more than to the tourist, is due the diminution, as very few are killed by the latter. A great trade has arisen, and declined, in alligator hides, and a few years ago all the native hunters were engaged in killing alligators. Even the swarthy Seminole Indian was induced to bring in the skin of a reptile his ancestors held in reverence and awe.

Now, though there is little demand for their skins, they are made to yield a revenue to the natives, in various ways. Their teeth, beautifully carved, and mounted in gold, are offered for sale, and boots and shoes are made of the best portions of their skins; while the small alligators are captured, held in captivity until the departure of winter visitors, when they are sold and transported north.

The alligator, although it very much resembles its cousin the crocodile, as you will see by the picture on the next page, is a different animal, and is found nowhere but in America. It is said that a crocodile or two have been killed in our Florida waters; but even if this is true, such instances are extremely rare.

Let us commence with the alligator *ab ovo*, or from the egg, and follow him to maturity, noticing his peculiar traits and the methods employed in his capture.

The eggs are of the size and shape of goose eggs, though a little more rounded at the small end, of a yellowish-white color. They are laid in nests constructed of mud and vegetable substances, which produce heat by fermentation, thus aiding in hatching the eggs.

The maternal alligator always keeps watch near the nest, as the male parent is very fond of young alligator, raw or cooked, and it requires all her diligence to prevent the total destruction of her offspring. As it is, the old fellow generally contrives to snatch up a few, though the little ones follow close in their mother's wake, spreading out like the tail of a comet.

The young are very nimble, even on land, and when in the water very deceptive in appearance as to size. I remember catching one by the tail, which appeared in the water to be about a foot in length, but it was a three-footer that turned upon me when it was jerked out of the water.

The size of the largest alligator is a matter of much dispute. Every native Floridian has his own story to tell of "that big 'gator," and statements vary, none exceeding twenty feet, most of them being satisfied with eighteen. Tolerably correct information has been obtained of the capture of one sixteen feet in length, but they rarely exceed fourteen.

For my part, though I have hunted in the wildest portions of

NEITHER OF THEM QUICK ENOUGH!

Florida, I have yet to see an alligator exceeding a length of twelve feet. My guide and myself once captured one measuring twelve feet. We harpooned him as he lay at the bottom of the river, and it was as though we had hitched on to a whale. For half an hour he made the boat spin through the water as it never went before. It took three shots to kill him, but we finally did it, and a steak from his tail was upon our bill of fare that night.

Was it good? Well, I have eaten better meat, meat more to my liking, than alligator steak.

The alligator, at all times, and under any circumstances, emits a disagreeable, musky odor, and his flesh is strongly impregnated with it.

His food is—any and everything. He is as omnivorous, or all-eating, as a crow. Birds, fishes, hogs, dogs, and even chunks of wood, are swallowed by him. Whether the wood is swallowed for sustenance or to aid digestion, the alligator alone can answer.

The vulnerable points of an alligator are greater in number than is popularly supposed. The statement that a rifle-ball will flatten out upon his side or back is now known to be incorrect. Contrary to the general belief, a rifle-ball will penetrate any portion of the body, if it strike fair.

Is the alligator dangerous? That depends upon circumstances. The only danger to be feared from an alligator, on land, is in his tail. He cannot run rapidly, and, conscious of his inability to escape, he either quietly submits or lashes out furiously with his tail.

They rarely leave their watery abodes, except from an insufficient depth of water or scarcity of food. They seem to scent a body of water a long way, for their trails to them are generally direct. Very few instances have come to my knowledge of any one being bitten by an alligator. One was of a man being seized by the hand, as he was stooping to drink from a pool. It was only by the opportune arrival of aid that he escaped.

They prefer negroes to white men, and hogs and dogs to either. An alligator will follow on the trail of a dog for a long distance, and it is difficult for settlers near the banks of an alligator-haunted river or lake to keep dogs at all.

I recall one of my adventures while hunting some rare waterbirds. My friend and myself had penetrated a swamp, and had entered a place where the water was waist-deep, black with mud, and alive with alligators. It was a strange sight to me, and I rather shrank from proceeding any further; but my friend, who had been acquainted with 'gators for years, said there was no danger, and we went in. On every side were the knotty heads and evil-looking eyes of scores of alligators. They swam about us, seemingly more from curiosity than from any other motive, but they gulped up our dog with a rapidity that set my heart a-beating. I shot and shot, as fast as I could, with a breech-loading shot-gun, but failed to disperse them. That they didn't eat us I attributed to the abundance of food that, in the shape of young birds, literally dropped from the trees into their mouths. Many were the birds we lost, for as they fell into the water the alligators rushed for them and seized them before we could get them.

I do not think that an alligator will attack man unless he has him at a great disadvantage. They are cowardly, but know their power in the water, and probably would seize a man if they met him swimming beyond his depth.

LITTLE THINGS.

So do not be discouraged, dear children, because you are little, or talk of doing this or that when you are big. A little star shines brightly way up in the sky on a dark night, and yet it may be the means of saving many poor sailors from shipwreck who take it for their guide. And little earnest Christians may do a great deal of good in this world if they try. There is nothing like trying.

Shall I tell you what tiny insects have accomplished? They have built whole islands.

Once upon a time an eminent naturalist by the name of Foster was voyaging around the world with Cook, and it is said that he first made known the most remarkable characteristics of the coral reefs.

A long way from here, in the South sea, rises a narrow ridge out of the fathomless ocean. Cocoanut-trees grew on the ridge and little lizards were found creeping here and there, while far and wide no coast nor land was to be easily reached. Who could tell who built this ridge, and planted those trees in the boundless ocean?

Through close study into the matter, it was found that hundreds of years ago little industrious insects called corals lived there. They did not like to build in the midst of the surge near the shore, and they died when exposed to sun and air. After they had been building some time in the bosom of the ocean, they stopped, for they had reached the surface of the water. Then, it is said, there came an earthquake, of which there are so many in the South sea, and the ground sank by degrees, and the tiny corals commenced building again, and went on, and on, until a volcano convulsed the bottom of the sea, and the great reef was suddenly raised above the water, and the little workmen died.

The waves broke off bits of the reef and the constant friction ground them into dust and sand; dead shells, sea-urchins, etc, washed upon the reef, also helped to consolidate it into hard and solid rock. Then the waves carried stray seeds that lodged in the sandy soil, and grew into great trees.

Years passed by, and one day the strong waves washed an old trunk of a tree on the reef, and when it had lain there a few days, two little lizards, it is supposed, crept out of it. They had travelled more than a thousand miles, and no doubt had had a very long sleep in their snug quarters. They made their new home in the roots of one of the cocoanut-trees. And soon, to the surprise of many, there were plenty of cocoanut-trees and lizards living on this coral island away out in the sea.

Thus you see even tiny insects can accomplish great and mighty deeds, little by little. So don't put off, until you grow up big, the performing kind acts and good deeds for others. Each one may not seem to amount to much, but if your lives are spared any length of time, taking all together who can tell what may grow out of them; where the good seed will take root, or how pleasing they will be to your Heavenly Father, or how great will be your reward when your work upon earth is finished?—*Child's Paper.*

TESTING HER INNOCENCE.

A poor, pale seamstress was arraigned for theft. She appeared at the bar with her baby of eleven months on her arm. She went to get some work one day, and stole three gold coins of ten francs each. The money was missed soon after she left her employer, and a servant was sent to her room to claim it. The servant found her about to quit the room with the three gold coins in her hand. She said to the servant, "I am going to carry them back to you." Nevertheless, she was carried to the Commissioner of Police; and he ordered her to be sent to the Police Court for trial. She was too poor to engage a lawyer, and, when asked by the judge what she had to say for herself, she replied: The day I went to my employer's, I carried my child with me. It was in my arms as it is now. I wasn't paying attention to it. There were several gold coins on the mantel piece, and, unknown to me, it stretched out its little hand and seized three pieces, which I did not observe until I got home. I at once put on my bonnet, and was going back to my employer to return them, when I was arrested. This is the solemn truth, as I hope for Heaven's mercy."

The Court could not believe this story. They upbraided the mother for her impudence in endeavoring to palm off such a manifest lie for the truth. They besought her, for her own sake, to retract so absurd a tale; for it could have no effect but to oblige the Court to sentence her to a much severer punishment than they were disposed to inflict upon one so young, and evidently so deep in poverty. These appeals had no effect, except to strengthen the poor mother's pertinacious adherence to her original story. As this firmness was sustained by that look of innocence which the most adroit criminal, can never counterfeit, the Court was at some loss to discover what decision justice commanded.

To relieve their embarrasment, one of the judges proposed to renew the scene described by the mother. Three gold coins were placed on the clerk's table. The mother was requested to assume the position in which she stood at her employer's house. There was then a breathless pause in court. The baby soon discovered the bright coins, eyed them for a moment, smiled, and then stretched forth its tiny hand, and clutched them in its fingers with a miser's eagerness. The mother was at once acquitted.—*Paris Exchange.*

A CAPITAL PRESCRIPTION.

A rather eccentric yet eminent physician was called to attend a middle-aged rich lady who had imaginary ills. After many wise enquiries about her symptoms and manner of life, he asked for a piece of paper and wrote down the following prescription: "Do something for somebody." In the gravest manner he handed it to the patient, and left.

The doctor heard nothing from the lady for a long time. On Christmas-morning he was hastily summoned to the cottage of her Irish washer-woman.

"It's not meself, doctor; it's me wrist that's ailing. You see, I was afther goin' out into the black darkness for a few bits of wood, when me foot struck this basket. It stood there like a big mercy, as it was, full of soft flannel from Mrs. Walker. She towld me that your medicine cured her, doctor; so, if you plaze to put a little of that same on me wrist, I'll be none the worse for me nice prisent."

"It is a powerful remedy," said the doctor, gravely. And more than once in after years he wrote the prescription: *Do something for somebody.—Ex.*

A CROCODILE TAKING THE AIR.

SKIPPING.

Boys, I want to ask you how you think a conqueror would make out who went through the country he was trying to subdue, and, whenever he found a fort hard to take, left it alone. Don't you think the enemy would buzz wild there, like bees in a hive, and when he was well into the heart of the country don't you fancy they would swarm out and harass him terribly?

Just so, I want you to remember, will it be with you. If you skip over the hard places in your lessons and leave them unlearned; you have left an enemy in the rear that will not fail to harass you and mortify you times without number.

"There was just a little bit of my Latin I hadn't read," said a vexed student to me, "and it was just there the professor had to call upon me at examination There were just two or three examples I had passed over, and one of those I was asked to do on blackboard."

The student who is not thorough is never well at his ease; he cannot forget the skipped problems, and the consciousness of his deficiencies makes him nervous and anxious.

Never laugh at the slow, plodding student: the time will surely come when the laugh will be turned. It takes time to be thorough, but it more than pays. Resolve, when you take up a study, that you will go through with it like a successful conqueror, taking every strong point.

If the inaccurate scholar's difficulties closed with his school life, it might not be so great a matter for his future career. But he has chained to himself a habit that will be like an iron ball at his heel all the rest of his life. Whatever he does will be lacking somewhere. He has learned to shirk what is hard, and the habit will grow with years.—*Morning Star.*

THE VALUE OF ONE TRACT.

The *Advertiser*, Leamington, England, publishes the following: "Some fifteen years ago, a young man, a Spaniard by birth, visited Leamington, from New York, and received a tract in the Pump-rooms, which was given to him casually by a lady. It was one of Canon Ryle's tracts, and it was the means of his conversion. On returning to America, where his parents had taken up their residence, he entered one of the Universities, and, having been ordained by Bishop Potter, was appointed missionary to the Spanish-speaking people in New York. From thence he went to Mexico, some ten years ago, and was presented by the Emperor Maximilian's successor with one of the principal churches in the capital. He translated the whole of Canon Ryle's tract into Spanish, and the result was that there are now one hundred and sixty Protestant congregations in Mexico, whereas nine years ago there was but one, and 63,000 people have seceded from the Church of Rome. This was the result of one tract casually given to a visitor in the Pump-rooms at Leamington." The title of the tract is, it is said, "Are You Forgiven?"

A BLACKSMITH'S STORY.

A subscriber, who is a blacksmith, says that he sees a great improvement in the temper of the horses he shoes now as compared with the horses he shod a few years ago, because, as he said, owners are setting the horses better examples. The old maxim, "Like master, like man," in its spirit, extends with even greater force to the animal creation than to man. "Lately," he said, "a horse came to my shop that was difficult of approach. 'What have you done to this horse?' I asked of the owner. 'I have been mad with him. I lost my temper pretty often; and of course he does not know what to expect from you or anybody. The horse is not to blame; The fault is mine.'" This man was of the sort known as fractious, and wholly unfit to control others, whether man or beast; but he had the wit to see and the justice to acknowledge the truth. Of the civilizing influence of gentle manners, there is no evidence so decisive as that furnished by the lower creatures. Happy indeed are they, when owned by masters and mistresses whose "blood and judgment are so well commingled" that their rule is one of uniform justice, tempered with mercy.—*Our Dumb Animal.*

The Family Circle.

LATE TO THE THRONE.

BY THE REV. S. W. DUFFIELD.

Born in the purple of purples,
To sit on a throne and be king,
With destiny marked and determined,
With fate in a golden ring,
With the way to the crown so easy
And the heirship of everything!

But the royal and loving father
Has said: "Not yet, my son!
You must know how the people sorrow;
How battles are lost and won;
How the heart and the brain together
Must labor till all be done."

And the royal and loving father
Sent forth the princely lad;
And he journeyed hither and thither
He saw both the good and the bad;
And his heart was grieved at the conflicts
And sorrows his people had.

Then late he came to his kingdom,
A touch of gray in his hair,
The lines of thought on his forehead,
Humility in his air;
But when he sat on the dais
They cried: "A king sits there!"

N. Y. Independent.

THE TWINS' DARK BIRTHDAY.

BY ELLA A. DRINKWATER.

It was the morning of the twins' tenth birthday, May 19, 1780, and they were sitting together on the door-stone finishing their breakfast of porridge and milk into which a spoonful of molasses has been stirred in honor of this anniversary.

"Grandsir'" was dozing in the chimney corner in the large kitchen behind them; their mother sat close to the eastern window spinning thread for Paul's coat; Keturah, the maid, was in the pantry skimming milk; Oliver, the man, was in the field ploughing with the two oxen, Star and Bright; and their father was in the army, fighting bravely and hopefully.

The children had blue eyes and straw-colored hair of the same shade, and when they stood up against the kitchen door to be measured one mark always served for both of them; but here the resemblance ended, for Patience was strong and rosy, while Paul was weak and pale.

"It rained a little this morning," said Paul, tasting his porridge with his pewter spoon, "and it thundered before I was awake."

"How did you know it when you were asleep?" asked Patience, showing the dimples in both cheeks.

"I felt it," answered Paul. "What made us sleep so late this morning, do you suppose?"

"It must be early," replied Patience, glancing up at the cloudy sky. "The sun hasn't risen yet, and the clock must be wrong," turning to look at the tall clock in the corner of the kitchen, whose hands pointed to a quarter of nine.

Suddenly there was an exclamation from the pantry and the sound of breaking earthenware.

"I thought the grandsir' had set himself afire again," cried Keturah, running to the old man's chair, "I smelt fire so strong, and I turned and dropped the milkdish."

"There is a strange, smoky smell, and grandsir' is unusually drowsy this morning. I wish we could have a good heavy shower to clear the atmosphere, for I want to finish Paul's coat to-day, and I can scarcely see to sew now. Just run out and turn the linen on the grass, children; I want it to be nice and white, for when it is bleached I shall make it into shirts for your father, though the war may be over and he at home before that time, please God."

Leaving their wooden bowls on the door-stone, the children ran across the damp grass.

"It is all smutty and dirty," cried Patience, lifting up one end of the long piece of linen.

"So it is," replied Paul, bending over it. "It looks as if some one had brushed down the chimney back and then shaken the brush over the linen. Keturah will have to wash it."

"Keturah! Keturah! Come and look, Keturah!" they called.

Keturah came and looked at the soiled linen, then she rubbed it in her fingers and smelled of it, and then she looked straight up into the clouds.

"It rained down," she declared; "there's been woods afire, and the rain was full of burnt leaves. That must be why the sun has been so red for two or three days, and why he shows himself so little to-day."

Running to the barrel of rainwater at the end of the house, she dipped her large, red hand into the water.

"Just the same," she muttered, smelling of it. "Curious! curious!"

"What makes the birds twitter so?" asked Patience. "See! they are all flying to the woods, and singing just as they do at night. And hear how the roosters are crowing!"

"Perhaps they think it will rain," returned Keturah, glancing at the clouds with a startled face. "The clouds are breaking away, but it don't get any lighter. I wonder what your marm thinks now."

"How green the grass looks!" exclaimed Paul.

"Green!" repeated Patience; "why, it's as blue as blue can be."

"As blue as indigo," added Keturah perplexed.

"What crooked eyes you both have!" cried Paul. "Oh, mother, how does the grass look to you?" he asked, as the mother came to the door with a grave face.

"A most beautiful green," she answered. "I never saw anything more lovely; but in the corners it has a bluish appearance; it is very strange when there is so little light. But run down the lane, children, and see what ails the sheep; they are bleating as if they were in trouble."

"Take hold of my hand if you want to," invited Paul; and, afraid, they knew not why, they clasped hands and ran toward the meadow bars.

"The hens are going to roost," said Paul, as they passed the hen-house. "They never went to roost in the morning before."

"Hurry!" cried Patience. "The cows are lowing as if they wanted to be milked."

At the bars they found an impatient group; the cows were trying to jump over the stone wall, and the sheep were huddled together bleating piteously.

"Perhaps they got frightened by bears," suggested Patience.

"Then I'll open the bars," said Paul beginning to draw aside the heavy rails. "Stand back, Patsy."

Patience had scarcely time to obey his caution before the cows rushed past her, closely followed by the frightened sheep.

"I'll leave the bars open," decided Paul, "because it tires me to put them up, and Oliver is coming this way with the oxen. I wonder if he thinks it is dinner-time? Nobody blew the horn for him."

"They are going right straight into their pen," announced Patience, looking after the hurrying sheep, "and the cows have gone into their shed. And oh, how dark it grows! Let us run!"

At the door they found their mother watching for them, and when they entered the kitchen they saw Keturah lighting a candle at the fireplace.

"When I couldn't see to read the almanac in the forenoon, in a room with two windows, I thought it was proper time to light a candle," she observed, as she straightened herself.

"And now I'll have my supper and go to bed," the great-grandfather said sleepily, rubbing his eyes with his trembling fingers.

"But it is only the forenoon, grandsir'," explained Patience, standing at his side and shouting into his ear, "and we are to have Indian dumplings boiled in the pot for dinner. We only light the candle because a thunder-shower is coming up, and that makes the day so dark," she added, looking into her mother's face for confirmation to her words.

"I do not know what it is, child," answered the mother, "but God will take care of us, whatever it is."

"A dark day!" enquired the great-grandfather, with his hand up to his ear. "I remember all about—that—that happened in—the year—seven-teen—hundred—and—sixteen. We did not know—what it was—dark—dark—all day. Never—knew—what it was. Never—knew—what it was," he repeated, sinking back in his chair and closing his eyes.

"What's that?" asked Paul, as several small objects were apparently thrown in at the door.

"'Tis the day of judgment of ungodly men come at last," howled Keturah, dropping down on the hearth-rug and covering her face with her apron.

"Only some poor little sparrows," said the mother, picking them up from the floor.

"Poor little things," echoed Patience, receiving them in her pinafore. "Three are dead," she said, touching them tenderly; "but these two have their hearts beating. Oh how fast they do beat?"

"It is a bad omen for birds to come in the house. They never come to do nobody no good. Oh, lawk! we shall all be swallowed up," groaned Keturah.

"Not by the birds," smiled the mother. "Lay the dead ones in the grass, Paul, and put the others in a warm, quiet place where they can revive. They were attracted by the light."

Dropping the dead birds on the grass near the door-stone, Paul gave a hasty glance around; all out-of-doors was quiet and dark and solemn, the lights that were beginning to gleam here and there in the neighboring farm-houses appearing strangest of all.

"We are all bewitched together," declared Oliver, entering the kitchen behind Paul, and closing the door as if something frightful were following him. "I don't know whether I'm in this world or the next, and may the Lord have mercy on my poor soul."

"Sit down and rest, Oliver," said the mother, motioning him to the settee in the chimney corner. "The sun will shine brightly to-morrow, I trust. This darkness is only caused by a peculiar state of the atmosphere."

"A very peculiar state of the atmosphire, marm," repeated Oliver, wiping the cold perspiration from his face. "Most days in the mornings the shadders fall to the west, and in the afternoons they fall to the east, but to-day the shadders fell every way, and that's what scared me first, to have natur' turn agin me so. And then the mist riz straight up out of the springs and spread in a big red cloud, and then another lot of mist riz right up under that and made a green cloud, and then another white cloud came out of them same springs, and they all sailed off together one on top the other to the west, and finally got mixed up with the dark clouds."

"Very strange and beautiful," commented the mother, unrolling the cloth of her own weaving upon the table and proceeding to cut Paul's coat with her sharp shears.

"Strange enough, as you may say, marm," continued Oliver, his uneasiness lessening in the importance of the wonderful story he had to tell. "And Eben Strong he came along on horseback, and he said a mountain has grown up betwixt us and the sun, and we shall always live in the dark. And Seth Rider told him he thought the British has smashed us all up, and this is the sign of it. And some folks do say," lowering his voice, "that General Washington is dead."

"He can't be killed. God wouldn't let him be killed!" cried Patience from her little bench close to her mother. "Father says he has a charmed life."

"Well, well, I'll go and look after the cattle," said Oliver, rising to light the lantern. "You'll not expect a man to plough on such a day as this, marm."

"Certainly not," replied the mother; "do whatever you like. I think you will feel happier to be employed, and you will not have time for evil forebodings. When the Lord comes I wish to be doing my duty."

"So do I. So do I," repeated Oliver, going out into the twilight."

"I want the Lord to think well of me," whimpered Keturah, drawing the apron away from her face, "but I tremble so I can't do anything. I never heard of the like of this."

"The dark can't hurt us," declared Paul, "for grandsir' is all safe, and he lived through a dark day. So be a good woman, Keturah, and make the dumplings."

"I thought you children intended to learn a couple of Bible verses for your birthday," said their mother suggestively.

"So we do," answered Paul, taking the large Bible from the stand in the corner, feeling sure that no harm could come to him while holding this book. Seated together near the tall candle on the table, with the Bible open between them, grandsir' in his corner, Keturah peeling vegetables, and their mother cutting and fitting the little coat, the children ceased to feel that anything unusual was occurring; only when they glanced out of the window or up at the clock did a shivering fear creep over them, and then they drew nearer together and clasped the edges of the book more firmly.

"Here is just what we want," cried Paul. "'Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.' Keturah opens the Bible blindfolded to tell what she must do, and now this means that it will be as light as can be, Patty," he explained. "God knew that it would be dark to-day, and so he wrote this to tell us that the sun will shine, and we need not be afraid. Is that right, mother?"

"I think he will allow you to take the comfort of it in that way," she replied after an instant's hesitation. "It means something more than that to me."

So the children softly repeated the words over and over again until the coat was cut and basted, and the dinner was all ready. Oliver assisted the great-grandfather to his place at the table, and they all bowed their heads while he asked a tremulous blessing, then the mother helped them to the stew from the large blue platter and the dinner hour passed just as usual; but just as they were rising from the table a torch flashed past the windows and a loud rap sounded at the outer door.

"The day of doom has come!" shrieked Keturah, hiding her face in her lap.

"It is one of the neighbors," said the mother. "Open the door, Paul."

With trembling fingers Paul admitted Seth Rider.

"Are you all prepared to die?" asked the young man, setting his torch in the chimney corner.

"Sit down, Seth," invited the mother, placing a chair for him. "I see no [illegible] we are every day."

"Other folks think different," answered Seth, in surprise. "Everybody's crowding into the meeting-house, where they couldn't see each other's faces but for the candles, and Parson Smith he had prayed an hour when I left, about Pharaoh, and Judas, and Jezebel; but I thought I'd come and see how you folks was getting along, and perhaps you'd like to go to the meeting-house. The men are shaking and groaning, and the women are crying and fainting, and the young ones are bawling."

"I think I shall stay at home and do the duty of Friday," replied the mother. "If the world does not come to an end Paul will need his coat for Sunday, and if the world does come to an end to-day, I wish the Lord to find me doing the duty he has set for me; and besides, I do not know how to faint."

"I wish I felt as you do," said Seth, admiringly; "but just come to the door and see how things looks. This is the darkest spell of all."

Leaving grandsir' nodding over his plate all hastened to the door while Seth stood upon the door-stone holding his torch high above his head. The clouds were thinnest at the north; at the north-east they were very thick, and so low that the hills only half a mile away could not be seen; but the south-westerly hills near where the children's home was so dark that the grass could not be distinguished from the trees. All the clouds were in motion, hurrying one over the other, seeming to form three layers, the lower one being of a peculiar brassy hue.

"See the rainbow!" cried Patience, pointing to a faint red light in the clouds twenty or thirty feet above their heads.

"It may be the reflection of your torch, Seth," said the mother; "just place it behind the door."

"That is just it," acknowledged Seth, after trying the experiment several times. "Now what kind of a sign do you make of that?"

"It means that the clouds are damp, and so they reflect the light of your torch just as they do the sun when there is a rainbow. How many wonderful things we shall learn to-day."

"Well, I'll go back and tell the folks there is one woman with a clear conscience, who isn't afraid to live or die," said Seth, stepping into the path. "I paid folks all I owed them this morning, and I asked Eben Grey to for-

give me, too ; so I hope the Almighty will remember me in mercy."

For a moment they stood watching Seth as he walked down the road, stopping now and then to gaze up at the reflection that was following him.

"I've—had—my—sup—per—and—now—I'll—go—to—bed," the great-grandfather was saying when they entered the kitchen, and as he would not be persuaded that it was day-time Oliver helped him to bed in one of the small rooms off the kitchen. Rather more carefully than usual Patience began to wash the dishes ; Paul fed the swallows in his father's old hat in the corner of the settle; the mother stitched and pressed the seams of Paul's coat ; Keturah was induced to make preparations for the morrow's baking, and Oliver brought in several rakes to mend, saying apologetically :

"I can always work best when folks is around."

At three o'clock as Oliver was going out with the mended rakes he called them all to the door, and there they saw the outline of the sun, pale and shadowy.

"'Arise, shine ; for thy light is come!'" cried Paul, jumping up and down. "The Bible said so ! The Bible said so !"

"Yes, the sun is going on his appointed way," the mother said with great relief, "and it is not as dark as it has been.

But while she spoke the ghostly sun disappeared.

"Never mind," comforted Paul, trying to swallow the queer feeling in his throat, "for we know now that the sun is going right on ; and, oh, mother, may we sit up and see the moon ?"

"I think you may," promised the mother. "Now come in and begin the samplers that you have been talking about so long."

Delicate little Paul never thought of being ashamed of doing "girl's work," and they were soon delightfully busy in selecting the bright worsted and beginning to mark their names, ages, the date, with the Bible verses they had learned that day. At supper time it was almost as dark as it had been at noon, but as soon as their bread and milk was eaten the children stationed themselves at the window to watch for the moon.

"The moon rises at nine o'clock," announced Keturah, looking up from the almanac.

"Oh !" cried both the children.

"You might say your hymns to me," proposed the mother ; "that will make the time pass quick."

Turning disappointedly from the window, the children drew their stools beside their mother on the hearth-rug ; they repeated all the hymns and Bible verses they knew, ending by kneeling together at their mother's knee to pray the little prayer that their great-grandmother had learned in the far-away English home.

"It is darker than ever," said Paul, running to the window. "And, oh, see the lights !"

A number of people with torches and lanterns were passing on their way to the meeting-house.

"Go with them, Keturah, if you will feel any better," advised the mother.

"I don't want to see nobody that is more afraid than I be, sobbed Keturah.

But, in spite of their anxious, impatient watching, it grew so dark that Oliver could not see his hand before his face when he stepped out of doors at nine o'clock. Earth and sky appeared to be swallowed up in blackness of darkness.

"We shall not see the moon until to-morrow night, children," said the mother ; "so go you to bed and I will call you when the sun rises."

The darkness was not frightful at night, for it was often dark at night ; so the weary, excited children fell asleep peacefully, sure that God and their mother would take care of them.

The next sound that Patience heard was Paul's voice calling her, and she opened her eyes to find the room full of light. Running to the window she saw the sun rising gloriously from a bed of scarlet and crimson clouds, causing all the dew-drops in grass and shrubs to twinkle like stars. The roosters were crowing, the hens cackling ; the sheep were scampering down the lane to the meadow ; Oliver was whistling as he watered the oxen, and Keturah was humming a psalm-tune while she heated the oven for baking. Grandsir' stood on the door-stone with bared head and a pleased smile on his childish face, and when she met her mother she received from her a rare kiss and the counsel, "Always trust the Lord, my child."

And now, when another little Paul and Patience coax their grandma for a story, the most wonderful one that she can tell them is about the dark birthday of herself and brother Paul.—*Christian Union.*

THE OCTOPUS.

The octopus is one of the most attractive sights in an aquarium, attractive so far as popular curiosity is concerned, but repulsive in appearance and habits to most beholders. Of the tribe of invertebrate, or boneless animals, to which the octopus belongs, there are various species, some of them of huge size, about which strange stories are told. That they can seize and destroy a man by dragging him under water with their tentacles or arms is well known. A recent and authenticated instance occurred in Australia—at least there is every appearance of its being authentic. Mr. Smale, the Government diver, was attacked by a large octopus, or devil-fish, while at work on the bed of the Moyne river, at Belfast, in the colony of Victoria. He gave this account of the affair : "Having thrust my arm into a hole, I found that it was held by something, and the action of the water was stirring up the loose clay, and therefore I could not see distinctly for a few minutes ; but when it did clear away I saw to my horror the arm of a large octopus entwined around mine like a boa constrictor, and just then he fixed some of his suckers on the back of my hand, and the pain was intense. I felt as if my hand was being pulled to pieces, and the more I tried to take it away the greater the pain became. I had the greatest difficulty in keeping my feet down, as the air rushed along the interior of my dress and inflated it ; and if my feet had got uppermost I should have soon become insensible, held in such a position ; and also, if I had given the signal to be pulled up, the brute would have held on, and the chances would have been that I should have had a broken arm. I had a hammer by me, but could not reach down to use it on the brute. There was a small iron bar about five feet from me, and with my foot I dragged this along, until I could reach it with my left hand. And now the fight commenced, and the more I struck him the tighter he squeezed until my arm got quite benumbed. After a while I found the grip begin to relax a little, but he held on until I had almost cut him to pieces, and then he relaxed his hold from the rock, and I pulled him up. I was completely exhausted, having been in that position for over twenty minutes. I brought the animal up, or rather a part of it. We laid him out, and he measured over eight feet across, and I felt perfectly convinced that this fellow could have held down five or six men."

The common octopus usually seen in aquaria, is not so formidable a creature, though voracious and fierce, especially the female when in charge of its young. No other inhabitant of the tank dare approach the corner where it ensconces itself behind a rampart of rough oyster-shells, which it builds for the protection of the ova.

The body of the octopus is oval, or sac-shaped, quite destitute of legs ; still, he is better off for arms than a monkey, possessing no less than eight powerful elastic or brachial appendages of unequal length, beautifully arranged like a crown round the mouth. The arms serve for locomotion, and are also the instruments for catching its prey, and feeding. They are a powerful machine—for if we look on the under surface we shall find a number (129 pair to each arm) of cup-shaped suckers. These suckers act like a boy's leather sucker or miniature air-pump. The arms are united at the base by a membrane. In the centre and at the bottom of these tentacles is the mouth, consisting of two horny jaws—resembling the beak of a parrot. They can easily crush the shell of the crustaceans with them. The eyes, which are wonderfully developed, are large and projecting, and the animal is able to enlarge and contract them at will ; when the octopus sleeps the eyes are contracted and partly covered by the eyelids. The iris is of a beautiful golden color. A fleshy funnel at the opening of the sac is for respiration.

A near relative of the octopus, the *Sepia officinalis*, makes frequent use of the contents of his inkpouch. The ink is probably used for the purpose of suddenly concealing himself when threatened by an enemy.

The change of color in the octopus is a remarkable property, which it has in common with the chameleon. This is effected through numerous color-cells, underlying the white surface of the skin, which are again in connection with a nervous system. It is worth recording, that while the octopus and eledone exhibited brighter color when exposed to light, the chameleon becomes dark in sunshine.—*Sunday at Home.*

DOING GOD'S ERRANDS.

Hester was a little girl who was trying to love and serve Jesus. And she showed her love for Jesus by seeking to please Him in all she did. She loved to do errands for her mother, and to have her mother say she was a faithful servant when she did them well.

One day she had been talking with her mother about God. As they got through, she looked up with a bright thought beaming in her eyes, and said :

"Why, mother, then God is sending us on errands all the time ! Oh ! it is nice to think that I am God's little errand-girl."

"Yes, dear," said her mother ; "God has given us all errands to do for Him, and plenty of time to do them in, and a book full of directions to show us how to do them. Every day we can tell him what we are trying to do, and ask Him to help us. And when He calls us home to Himself, we shall have great joy in telling Him what we have been trying to do for Him."

"I like that," said Hester. "It is very pleasant to be allowed to do errands for God."

"One of my errands," said her mother, "is to take care of you."

"And one of mine, dear mother, is to honor and obey you. I think God gives us very pleasant errands to do."

You know that nothing makes us more happy than to do anything for a person that we really love. This is what Jesus meant when He said, "My yoke is easy, and My burden light." This is what the Apostle John meant when he said that "His commandments are not grievous." His people serve Him from love, and that makes everything they do for Him light and pleasant to them. —*Selected.*

"FAST BIND, FAST FIND."

F irmly clinging to Thy Cross.
A ll earthly gain I count but loss ;
S aviour, Thou hast died for me,
T each me to die to self for Thee.

B y the threefold cord divine,
I n mercy bind my heart to Thine ;
N or before Thy Father's throne
D isdain Thy servant's name to own.

F ully in Thy Name I trust,
A ll earthly staffs but turn to dust ;
S aviour, Thou art my sure stay,
T ake not Thy Holy Cross away.

F ix my heart on Thy sole love,
I n hidden treasure, safe above ;
N one can pluck that soul away,
D ear Lord, that on Thy Cross doth stay.

PRIDE.

Prov. xxviii. 25 : "He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife ; but he that putteth his trust in the Lord shall be made fat."

Isaiah ii. 12 : "For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty and upon every one that is lifted up ; and he shall be brought low."

Mal. iv. 1, 3 : "Behold the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven ; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble : and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave neither root nor branch. And he shall tread down the wicked ; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts."

James iv. 5, 6 : "Do you think that the Scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."—*The Christian.*

ARE YOU SAFE?

Two little girls were playing with their dolls in the corner of the nursery, and singing as they played :

"Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on his gentle breast,
There by his love o'ershaded,
Sweetly my soul shall rest."

Mother was busy writing, only stopping now and then to listen to the little ones' talk, unobserved by them.

"Sissy, how do you know you are safe?" asked Nellie, the younger of the two.

"Because I am holding Jesus with both my two hands—tight!" promptly replied Sissy.

"Ah ! that's not safe," said the other child. "Suppose Satan came along, and cut your two hands off!"

Little Sissy looked very troubled for a few moments, dropped poor dolly, and thought deeply. Suddenly her face shone with joy, and she cried out, "Oh ! I forgot ! I forgot ! Jesus is holding me with His two hands, and Satan can't cut His hands off, so I am safe !"

Question Corner.—No. 9.

Answers to these questions should be sent in as soon as possible and addressed EDITOR NORTHERN MESSENGER. It is not necessary to write out the question, give merely the number of the question and the answer. In writing letters always give clearly the name of the place where you live and the initials of the province in which it is situated.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

97. Where is the prophecy ascribing five different names to Christ, and what are the names ?
98. From the top of what mountain did Moses view the promised land and where is the mountain situated ?
99. What is the principal bay on the west coast of Palestine, and what mountain may be seen from it ?
100. For what is this mountain noted ?
101. On what mountain was Solomon's temple built ?
102. In what connection is this mountain first mentioned in the Bible ?
103. Where did the Angel of the Lord appear to Moses in the burning bush ?
104. What was the name of the month in which the Passover was kept, and to which of our months does it correspond ?
105. To whom did Christ utter the words, "Blessed are they that have not seen and have believed," ?
106. To whom did Christ say, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world ;" where was he at the time, and was it before or after his resurrection ?
107. What other disciple besides Peter saw Christ alone after his resurrection ?
108. Who, attended only by his armor-bearer, attacked the garrison of the Philistines ?

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN NO. 7.

73. Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Gen. xl. 1, 22.
74. The butler. Gen. xl. 20, 21.
75. For names see Gen. xiv. 1, 2. Lot Abraham's nephew was carried away captive and was rescued by Abraham. Gen. xiv. 12, 16.
76. Melchisedec. He is mentioned in the seventh chapter of Hebrews. Gen. xiv. 18, 19.
77. Saul. 1 Sam. x. 23.
78. Samuel. 1 Sam. viii.
79. Saul, David, Solomon and Rehoboam.
80. Eglon, Ehud. Judges iii. 14, 26.
81. Cushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia. Judges iii. 7, 9.
82. Agag, king of the Amalekites. 1 Sam. xv. 32. 33.
83. In the presence of Achish, king of Gath. 1 Sam. xxi. 12 15.
84. Herod the Great ; hoping thereby to destroy the infant Jesus. Matt. ii. 16.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

N ekod A
O d e D
A gripp A
H adora M

Noah. Adam.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

To No. 7.—Carrie S. Hatfield, 12; David McGee, 12; James A. Donaldson, 11 ac; Sadie Doupe, 11; Martha Hastings, 11; Cora M. McIntire, 11; Frederick J. Priest, 11; Clara Suck, 11 ; Andrew Paterson, 11; Aggie Murdoch, 10; Isabella S. Barr, 10; James Wainright, 5.

To No. 6.—David M. McGee, 12 ; James Dudley, 12 ; William Fairchild, 12 ; Maggie Sutherland, 12 ; Herbert Davidson, 12; Maud Armstrong, 12 ; Kate Mills, 12; Edward Clark, 12; Edward R. Craig, 12; William B. McKechnie, 12; William A. Piper, 12; Phebe A. Gertridge, 12; Robert W. Murkar, 12; Carrie Edmunds, 12; Archd. Cairns, 12; Milton Hall, 12; A. Paterson, 12 ; George Jarrett, 11 ; Jennie Hallie Russell, 11; Cora M. McIntire, 11 ; T. Sturrock, 11 ; Agnes McDonald, 11; Willie H. Simmons, 10; Florence E. Wetherby, 10; Annie Pattison, 10; Minnie Fotheringham, 9; John H. Milford, 9; John Braithwaite, 6.

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SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1883, by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday-School Union.)

LESSON VI.

MAY 8.] [About 28 A.D.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

Luke 15: 11-24.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 21-24.

11. And he said, A certain man had two sons:

12. And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

13. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

14. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

15. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

17. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18. I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee.

19. And am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants.

20. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

22. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet;

23. And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:

24. For this my son was dead, and he is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

GOLDEN TEXT.

I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee.—LUKE 15: 18.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

None that come through Christ will be cast out.

INTRODUCTORY.—The Parable of the Prodigal Son is called the "pearl and crown" of all the parables. "Never certainly in human language was so much—such a world of love and wisdom and tenderness compressed into so few immortal words. All sin and punishment, all penitence and forgiveness find their best delineation in these few sentences."—Farrar. The Parable of the Prodigal Son supplements those of the Lost Sheep and Lost Coin, presenting man, in the use of his free moral agency, no less in the course of sin, than in the work of conversion.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) SINNING. (II.) DESTITUTE. (III.) REPENTANT. (IV.) RESTORED.

I. SINNING.—(11-13.) CERTAIN MAN, represents God who is our Father, Acts 17: 25, 29; TWO SONS, may refer to the Pharisees (represented by the elder brother) and to the Publicans (represented by the younger) or to the Jews and the heathen, or to those who enjoy gospel privileges and those who reject them; GAVE HIM, he was dissatisfied with his home; NOT MANY DAYS AFTER, impatient haste; GATHERED, he chafed for freedom; FAR COUNTRY, the land of the sinner away from God; WASTED, we misuse God's gifts, squander our opportunities in the service of the enemy rather than to the praise of God; RIOTOUS LIVING, sensuality.

II. DESTITUTE.—(14-16.) FAMINE, his destitution and want now began; FEED SWINE, unclean animals, the lowest degradation and most abject wretchedness the Jew could conceive of; HUSKS, pods of the Carob tree, "something like those of the honey-locust from six to ten inches long. I have seen large orchards of this tree in Cyprus, where it is still the food which the swine do eat." —Thomson's Land and Book.

III. REPENTANT.—(17-19.) WHEN HE CAME TO HIMSELF, an important change; sin is mental lunacy. It is a beast against God; WILL ARISE, a resolute determination; GO TO MY FATHER, faith in God; AM NO MORE WORTHY, makes no excuses. "By grace are we saved"; WHEN, while.

IV. RESTORED.—(20-24.) HIS FATHER SAW HIM, he was longing for his return. So God is waiting to be gracious; KISSED HIM, an allusion to the robe of righteousness, Isa. 61: 10 RING, token of favor. Redeemed sinners have the seal of the Spirit, Eph. 1: 13; WAS DEAD, lost to the father, but virtue and holiness, "dead in trespasses and sins."

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS SUGGESTED BY THE PARABLE: (1.) What are the wages of sin? Rom. 6: 23. (2.) How does the lesson represent repentance? v. 17. (3.) What are God's feelings toward sinners? Ezek. 33: 11. (4.) How many must make the confession of v. 21? Rom. 3: 23.

THE

PORTION, REQUEST, OBDURACY, DEPARTURE, INFAMY, GUILT, AWAKENING, LOWLINESS, SONSHIP,

FATHER

FEELINGS, ANXIETY, TENDERNESS, HOME BRINGING, EMBRACE, ROBE AND RING, SUPREME JOY,

ALL, ALL GRACE.

LESSON VII.

MAY 15.] [About 28 A. D.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

Luke 16: 19-31.

COMMIT TO MEMORY VS. 25, 26.

19. There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.

20. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores,

21. And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

23. And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue: for I am tormented in this flame.

25. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

27. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

28. For I have five brethren: that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

30. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

31. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death.—PROV. 14: 32.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

All is lost if the soul is lost.

INTRODUCTORY.—The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus was uttered in answer to the derision of the Pharisees whom our Lord had arraigned for covetousness, verse 14. "The decision of the next world will often reverse the estimate in which men are held in this."—Farrar's Life of Christ, ii. 324. This is the main design of the parable. It is, however, full of instruction on other points, and is peculiarly valuable for the light it throws on the future state of the soul. While the imagery must not be pressed too far, yet the following truths may with certainty be deduced from it: The soul outlives the grave. There are two states of existence beyond, one of bliss and one of misery. And men's destinies in the future state are the lives they live here.

NOTES.—DOGS, frequently mentioned in the Bible. They seem to have been very numerous in the large cities, and to have performed the office of scavengers, as they do to-day in the Orient, 1 Kings 21: 19; 2 Kings 9: 10, 35, etc. Their name is often employed as a term of reproach in the Old and New Testaments, Isa. 56: 10; Phil. 3: 2, and they were regarded as unclean, Matt. 7: 6.—HELL, the word is Hades, and signifies the realm of departed spirits. It comprises two states, one of unhappiness and the other of bliss. The latter is called ABRAHAM'S BOSOM, or paradise, Luke 23: 43.—MOSES AND THE PROPHETS, an expression denoting the Old Testament, Luke 24: 27. Moses was the author of the books of the law, and his name is put for the Law.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) HAPPY AND WRETCHED IN THIS LIFE. (II.) HAPPY AND WRETCHED IN THE NEXT LIFE. (III.) THE GUIDE OF LIFE.

I. HAPPY AND WRETCHED IN THIS LIFE.—(19-21.) PURPLE, costly material brought from Tyre. The color was derived from a shell-fish. It was a royal color. The kings of Midian wore it, Judg. 8: 26, and Mordecai after his elevation, Esther 8: 15. The robe which the soldiers put upon Christ in mockery was also of this color, Mark 15: 17; John 19: 5; FINE LINEN, a texture made of flax very costly, here indicating luxury; LAZARUS, "God my help," a very suggestive name; DESIRING TO BE FED, we are not sure whether he was fed or not; DIED, both prince and beggar must meet death; ANGELS, the Jews believed that the righteous were carried by angels to Abraham's bosom as the place of bliss.

II. HAPPY AND WRETCHED IN THE NEXT LIFE.—(22-26.) LIFT UP HIS EYES, perhaps this simply means that he began to think and recollect; FATHER ABRAHAM, "the Jews supposed that departed spirits might know and converse with each other"; HAVE MERCY, too late. He should have uttered that cry on earth as others do, Matt. 15: 22; Mark 10: 48, and the publican, Luke 18: 13: SEND LAZARUS, the rich men and had exchanged places. He was now enjoying "true riches"; TORMENTED, a fearful reality; REMEMBER, memory recalling the abused opportunities of this life will be a chief contributor to our unhappiness; GREAT GULF, our characters are formed in this world, and our destinies are irreversibly fixed at death. A chasm lies between the two realms in the other world.

III. THE GUIDE OF LIFE.—(27-31.) I PRAY THEE, ETC., a second request. This is the believing and trembling of Jam. 2: 19; NAY, he had himself not listened to the Old Testament, and he knew his brothers would not.

APPLICATIONS SUGGESTED BY THE LESSON:

Upon what will the decision of the future life be based? Gal. 6: 7, 8.

Is future destiny fixed at death? verse 26.

Are the Scriptures ample for our enlightenment? 2 Tim. 3: 15.

What use should we make of this life? Amos 4: 12.

ILLUSTRATION.—Judgment Day Forgotten. Is it not foolish to be living in this world without a thought of what you will do in the next? A man goes into an inn, and as soon as he sits down he begins to order his wine, his dinner, his bed; there is no delicacy in season which he forgets to bespeak. He stops at the inn for some time. By and by the bill is forthcoming, and it takes him by surprise. "I never thought of that! I never thought of that!" "Why," says the landlord, "here is a man who is either a born fool or else a knave. What! never thought of reckoning—never thought of settling with me!" After this fashion too many live. They eat and drink and sin, but they forget the inevitable hereafter, when, for all the deeds done in the body, the Lord will bring us to judgment.—Spurgeon.

TRUSTING.

Although it is so very dark,
And I am all alone,
Mamma down-stairs, and nurse away
And no one here to talk or play—
Yet, God, I know to Thee the night
Is bright and shining as the light.

And Thou canst see Thy little child
And keep her safe from harm,
And though it is to her so dark,
Thou'lt shield her with Thy arm;
For to Thee, God, who made the night,
It shines as brightly as the light.

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